

**Minutes  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church  
February 17, 2015**

Prior to the meeting being called to order, Victor Koosh provided an excellent dinner for members of the Board and staff.

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church was called to order by President Richard Loftin. Other Board Members present were Barbara Crotty, Wade Greiner, Beth Hammer, Victor Koosh, Shannon Butler, Kris Taylor, Craig Miller, Mike Condit and Tony Collins. Staff members present included co-ministers, Mark and Becky Edmiston-Lange, DRE Katy Carpman, Business Administrator, Karen Van Horn and Mary Ann Stanley, secretary to the Board.

Wade Greiner announced that March 15 is the date for broadcast of the CNN show that features April. Wade will let us know the final time for the program when they are notified.

Rev. Mark shared a reading with the Board as the chalice was lit.

**The January Board minutes were approved** with the exception of a “0” missing from budget number on last page.

**Welcomes** New Emerson members: James Engle, Clint and Amy Harris and two children; Megan Rorie and Robert Kidwell

**Consent Reports:**

- **Ministers:** The Ministers and others from the Board and the congregation had just returned from a day in Austin to let the legislative bodies know where Unitarians Universalists stand on many of the issues of the day. Although the legislators themselves were not available they did meet with five offices that represent most of the members of Emerson. They were grateful to Kenny Jones for making the arrangements and encouraging such a large number from Emerson to participate in the daylong adventure. Becky reported that she believes from the responses they received that Texas will soon recognize same-sex marriages. When that happens, Emerson plans to celebrate with a community-wide party.
- **RE Director:** Katy Carpman echoed that she also had heard similar thoughts from a Travis County Probate judge who declared it unconstitutional. This coming Sunday the lesson for the children will be on marriage inequality and they will be encouraged to write letters to the Governor or express their opinion in other ways. Katy also challenged the Board members to participate in the children’s first hour this summer by sharing with them “things you love” that are suitable for children.
- **Business Administrator:** January was a very good month, with a \$94,943 surplus due to many pre-paid large pledges:
  - **Jan. Operating Account total income and expense figures:**

• Jan. 2015 Income	\$151,942
• Jan. Expenses	56,981
• Jan. Surplus	94,943
• Surplus to date	94,943

- Tony pointed out that the total giving in 2014 exceeds the pledges and suggested that “Some folks refuse to pledge but they don’t refuse to pay.” A discussion on the new constitution rule that links pledging with church membership resulted in the need to contact those not pledging. Tony offered to draw up a plan and a possible letter that can be used.
- **Copier/Printer problem.** Karen described the troubles with our copier that have diminished our ability to produce the bulletins, newsletters, etc for the past month. At one time we even asked Tanglewood to use their printer. Karen presented the pertinent financials, including a comparison of leasing and buying comparable equipment that mirrors our current monthly cost. She recommended 6 year lease with a buy-out for \$1 at the end. Comment: “it will be worn out by then.” Lease, service and copies come as a bundle for that amount. **Kris Taylor moved and Barbara Crotty seconded to accept offer. The motion passed unanimously.**
- **Treasurer:** Tony Collins explained that the GIFT program is the new UUA contribution request. It combines the former SW Conference and UUA dues, and currently applies only to the Southern Region of UUA, which is replacing the Southwest Conference shortly. They request a contribution of 6.51% of our budgeted expenses. We are currently contributing 5.4% (excluding pass-through collections). Tony raised a question to Region staff as to whether the free use of a parsonage would be considered an expense for these purposes, and got a non-responsive reply.
- **Committee Liaisons** were urged to check with his/her committee. No reports
- **Board Dinner restrictions?** Food allergies/preferences include two vegetarians and one allergy to seafood.

#### **New business:**

- **The Auction April 25**
  - BOT Wine Lottery – each Board member is asked to donate a “good” bottle of wine (\$20 or so) and another of lesser value. Craig offered a bottle of Bollinger La Grande Année – 1990 for the grand prize with Cynthia’s approval.
  - Each board members was urged to think creatively about what they, their family and/or their committees can donate to the auction; example: the Worship Committee that auctioned a house blessing.
- **Kilgore Lecture March 6** at 7:30 PM
  - David Eagleman, Ph.D, Departments of Neuroscience and Psychiatry Baylor College of Medicine, will be the speaker at the Kilgore Lecture March 6. In addition to his books on the brain written at a lay level, Dr. Eagleman has been an interesting speaker on the Colbert Report, several Ted talks and many U-Tube clips. Emerson was fortunate that he is speaking for us at less than his usual fee.

#### **Old business:**

- **UUVFJ Action** Follow-up from 2/13 -- UUvoice for Justice Action – about 60 people downtown at city hall including about 30 UUs; positive energy; chanting a little more assertive than we do: “no rights/ no peace”
- **TXUUJM Legislative Trip 2/17** – Covered in Ministers Report
- **Interfaith Ministries’ capital campaign;** After a lengthy discussion, it was proposed to ask members for a total of \$12,500 and then ask matching from endowment funds. It was pointed out that now only Outreach Committee can spend the money. Kris Taylor suggested that we have a “quiet” campaign and then ask Outreach to match what we bring in. ( \$1500 already in)

- **Outreach Committee** -- Richard will send out information from the meeting such as the names of the people asked to do things. He expressed his enthusiasm that the new stickers will generate excitement and will help raise the brand.
- **BOT Retreat Follow-up:** Richard will send out reminders of tasks assigned.
- **Stewardship:** Alisha Loftin will be a point person for stewardship

Barbara: Note from Sunday: A young man carrying a Bible came in the door. Three people warned Mark about him. Barbara talked to him since there was some concern that he would make a scene during service. He laughed when told of concern. He met Lori Reeder on met-up; really liked the sermon and singing the hymns. He was raised a Catholic in Mexico and is trying to learn more.

Tony Collins reminded the Board that “we have not yet dealt with membership re: the bylaws.” He pointed out that we should be contacting people that will not be members after March. Becky offered that we stand to lose about 70 -75 members. Victor will write letter, Kris will wordsmith. A discussion followed about what keeps people from making the commitment. We do need some ministerial input into why some folks feel the way they do. If check has “pledge” on it, task force decided that it would work. What is not a pledge is “donation.” The problem needs much more work from the committee to achieve maximum results.

Richard reported on our minister in training Randy Partain. He is doing very well, but Emerson members as his sponsor should take active roles in supporting him and Joy.

The chalice was extinguished with a closing reading.

The meeting was adjourned.